The Public Library of the City of St. Louis

Addresses and Other Proceedings
at the Opening Exercises
OF THE
New Central Library Building
January sixth
1912

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OPENING EXERCISES.

The opening exercises of the new Central Building of the St. Louis Public Library were held in the great Delivery Hall in the presence of about 800 persons, about 75 of whom sat upon the speakers' platform. George O. Carpenter, Esq., President of the Board of Directors, occupied the chair.

President Carpenter opened the proceedings by introducing Rt. Rev. Daniel S. Tuttle, Bishop of Missouri, who delivered the following invocation:

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, The fountain of wisdom and truth, we thank Thee for the manifold blessings of Thy Providence and grace; for the civil and religious liberty which we enjoy; for the health to our bodies, the enlightenment to our minds, and the uplift to our souls ministered in our age and time.

Gathered here on the light-giving Epiphany day, in this building largely provided by the beneficence of one person, now thrown open for the purposes of a Public Library, we would fain remember how Thou hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, and how Thou hast given to the wit and skill and industry of man to invent and perfect the precious art of printing.

We humbly pray Thee that Thy blessing may rest upon this treasure house of good and helpful books. May the reading of them deepen and strengthen reverence for Thee and love of country and sweet unselfishness in living. Give Thy Holy Spirit to guide those charged with the management of this Library. May the workers in it and the beneficiaries of it, lifting up their hearts unto Thy wisdom, see as in Thy light, and learn as from Thy light, and walk as by Thy light, in the days of the years of their earthly life.

Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good repute—may they and we think on these things.

Bless the land we live in, and mould into one happy people the multitudes coming hither out of many kindreds

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and tongues, and so guide us in all our doings that, if it be Thy blessed will and in Thine own wise way, peace may rule the world.

Grant, O Lord, that this building, because of the purposes for which it stands, may admonish us that there are other interests besides those solely commercial; and that, beyond its material prosperity, our land is favored and blessed in the mental and moral enlightenment of its people.

To such end may all the uses of this building, under Thy blessing, contribute; and in its own way may it be a constant instrumentality for good in our midst—through Jesus Christ our Lord, who taught us to pray:

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: When a library in this country needs help, it naturally turns to Washington—to the Library of Congress. That is our great repository of books, and when we need advice of any kind, we look in that direction, and we usually get it from the Librarian. I have great pleasure in presenting to you today Dr. Herbert Putnam, Librarian of Congress. (Applause.)

DR. PUTNAM: An occasion such as this has its peril, not merely for the speaker, but for the audience. It is to celebrate and confirm a service which is the service of books and of libraries. And one cannot easily treat the service of books without repeating the definitions of it which have become by-words, nor that of libraries without going over ground already beaten hard (and dry!) by many a predecessor, before many an audience.

But there are reflections that may furnish some relief; among them this: that the really fundamental truths can never be wholly trite; and that the repetition of them on certain formal occasions reconfirms them, and healthily refreshes the public conscience. So on Washington's birth-

day we re-read gravely his Farewell Address, and on the Fourth of July, the Declaration of Independence; and in doing so renew our convictions and our allegiance, and steady ourselves once more against the fitful dispositions of the moment which may sway us from such first principles. Quite inevitably then at the dedication of a library we revert to the fundamental nature of the material which was its reason for being, and through which it is to operate. We yield ourselves to the contemplation of the book as such. And first we think of the praises of it which swell the dictionaries of quotation and themselves form a plump Enchiridion for the book-lover. They are, to be sure, mostly those of the reader looking to his own satisfactions merely: of the mere idealist interested rather to think the right thing than to do the presently helpful thing; of the philosopher, the "lofty and sequestered soul"—seeking the comradeship of other lofty and sequestered souls; of the mere antiquarian, for whom the present is of concern only because without a present there could not be a past; if occasionally of the man of action—chiefly of the defeated man of action. Him they comfort by suggesting that success is often won by ugly means. Books are never peevish, never traitorous, never speak unless spoken to. They have been the natural solace of the unfortunate whose affairs are perverse, whose friends are ungracious, or whose wife is a scold.

But we soon turn from this limited and personal service to their larger one—in the sympathies that they engender by the laughter and the tears that they evoke: bringing together the distant and the diverse—the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the cheerful and the forlorn, the man to whom opportunity is a gift and the man for whom it must be a struggle; and we glow with the recognition of this as a social service, humane and far-reaching.

But then again their service in aid of pure efficiency, not merely in the professions, but in the ordinary business of life, and how in this the most ordinary book may bring to the ordinary man something extraordinary. He is a mechanic: the master workman of today speaks to him—instructs him—through books. He is a farmer: a book may tell him of the larger movements of the seasons, and

of nature's processes. He is the dweller in an inland town: it may take him to the sea, and beyond the sea. He knows but his nearest neighbor: a man the duplicate of himself —alike in race, habit, occupation, inexperience; it may bring him to the acquaintance of a multitude of men of other races, habits, occupations and experiences. He lives but in the day at hand: an insect does that. He may lay up for the ensuing winters. There are insects which do that. Through books, however, there may be revealed to him a great past, full of varied experiences, endeavor, and heroic achievement. No insect has that. To man alone can history be a conscious fact. To him alone is it given to survey the experiences of his ancestors and to profit by them. He alone can learn what manner of grapes his fathers ate, that his teeth are set on edge—and by his own avoidance save the teeth of his own posterity.

To man alone of all creatures is given perspective and sense of proportion. To him alone is it given through history to see his own largeness, and through science his own littleness. Not to avail himself of this opportunity is to ignore his greatest capacity. By availing himself of it he escapes that provincialism of mind and of self-esteem which like all provincialism is always exorbitant,—always expresses itself in the superlative.

He stands, it is said, upon the shoulders of his ancestors. But he reaches there only by reviewing the experiences which have gone to make their stature. To be up with the age, he must be up with the ages. Otherwise there is no proper heredity: each generation is a child, constrained to learn by its own experiments alone. Through books, however, the conscious experiences of his ancestors are transmitted to him,—informing him as science, affecting him as art.

> "'Tis the privilege of art
> Thus to play *its* cheerful part,
> Man on earth to acclimate
> And bend the exile to his fate,
> And, molded of one element
> With the days and firmament,
> Teach him on these as stairs to climb
> And live on equal terms with Time."

"On equal terms with time": on equal terms also with his fellows—in exact knowledge, in sound understanding, in right feeling.

And all this, through the potent leverage of books. To such a plane has our rhapsody carried us. And we do not have to descend with any discomfiting abruptness when our reflections are broken by the particular business of this moment—when from the contemplation of literature in the abstract we are required to consider the organized service of books in a library—in this library.

Of the latter it is the privilege of your own representatives to speak. As a visitor, my right—by your courtesy—can be only to touch those larger considerations which are common to all such institutions. Yet I find three intimate reasons for welcoming a place upon your program. The first two are professional and personal; the third is official, arising out of the office I hold. As a librarian, for many years prior to my present post engaged in the administration of a municipal library, my interest remains keen in an occasion such as this which expresses the confidence of a great community in such a library and assures for it an ampler and more enduring opportunity. And the satisfaction is not diminished by the fact that this building represents a partnership between the community and an individual not a member of it: for in this very fact the building will represent not merely the convictions of the community which it will serve, but also those of a master in philanthropy (not yet a *past* master, thank Heaven) who, with untrammeled vision, looking largely over the whole field, has chosen to lend his aid to it. Fortunate, that it is one of that large group which he has seen fit to promote. And it will not impair, but rather emphasize its service that, though he does not stipulate that his name shall be attached to it—for he never does—his name will inevitably be associated with it: for the name of Carnegie will in itself be a serviceable reminder of a man of business who not merely turned from a life of business to a business of philanthropy, but, applying to this new career the originality, the sagacity and the common sense which had made his fortune, has so shaped and directed his benefactions as to assure benefits more widespread,

more far-reaching, more enduring than it has ever before been given to an individual to achieve by the use of what he calls mere wealth.

And as a librarian I rejoice also that the institution for which this building provides will permanently memorialize another name—of one who gave to it another sort of wealth—the wealth of patient, passionate, personal, public service. Of such a service as his, memorials are rare—or rarely visible: for the task of an administrator is to merge himself in his work; and his success as an administrator will in a way be proportioned to the success of his effort to do so. He is endeavoring to shape something larger than himself and more lasting: to embody an ideal which he does not possess, but which possesses him. If he succeeds—in proportion as he succeeds—his own personality, his own identity, will be lost in that which it has created.

But if this must in the nature of institutions be so, it is humanly and professionally speaking unfortunate: for it deprives the community and the profession of the example and the stimulus of a life which is itself a lesson. And it must be a deep satisfaction to us librarians, that in gathering here to declare the future of this institution you insist upon recalling and paying tribute to the wise, open, gentle, persevering, unselfish spirit whose devotion has gone into its past.

The sound conception held by Frederick Crunden of the functions of a municipal library is upheld by our profession at large and by the thousands of communities which from time to time are expressing their convictions in occasions such as this. And this unanimity is the more notable because among other departments or processes of education it is so rare. The functions of school or college—the material and methods to be employed, even the results to be reached—are still, after centuries of discussion and experience—still fiercely debated. But as to the functions of public libraries there is after but three score years a substantial agreement: just as there is such an agreement that they are so important to the community as a whole that they should be maintained at the expense of the community as a whole; that no charge, however small, shall stand between them and their service; that no citizen, how-

ever poor, shall have the excuse of his poverty for neglecting them. And yet this agreement has required an advance from the first argument for such libraries—as a necessary complement to the system of the common school,—and the second—as a proper supplement to the school—to the more subtle justification of them as part of the apparatus for general culture. For as conceived today the public library is not merely to aid collaterally in the formal processes of the schools, and to furnish material for advanced learning beyond the schools, but to act directly upon the community at large no longer pursuing, or which has never far pursued the formal processes: furnishing to it facts which may serve it in its business, opinions which may influence it in its convictions, and influences which may affect it in its perceptions, its tastes, its conscience and its conduct. In the combination of these functions it is unique. Other institutions have their individual province—the schools themselves, the university, the museum, the art gallery, the recreation ground. The library in itself touches all: for books themselves in their various phases and their various applications—books themselves touch all. They furnish certain facts essential to business (and not merely to the businesses called professions); but they *mean* much more. They mean association with the ideals of persons and peoples foreign to us in mode, habit and problems; and some experience of the beauty, some conviction of the utility, of arts that we neither practice nor have occasion to depend upon in our mere vocations. They mean thus not a mere expansion of knowledge but an enlargement of the understanding, which is a condition of sympathy, which is a condition of humor, which is a condition of tolerance; and all of which together are a condition of humane, co-operative good citizenship. And we may not omit that literature whose service is to sharpen the perceptions, stir the imagination, refine the taste, mend the manners, tone the conscience, gladden the heart, or comfort the soul.

For such books also—and not merely the disciplinary and the informing, are within the province of the public library. Indeed, it is in connection with them that it has an opportunity for a public service of prime importance,

—which is: "to push the competition" of them against the trash. The competition needs to be pushed, for such books are in their very nature modest and responsive; while the trash is insolent and aggressive. It is also cheap, dangerously cheap. It may almost be had for the asking —even without the asking. It pours out from our presses —like Castlereagh's oratory—"in one weak, washy everlasting flood." And it intrudes everywhere. Needless to say I do not mean by "trash" the deliberately vicious books. There aren't really so many of these nor so much peril in what there are: for the habit and disposition of our people are fairly proof against them. It is the flabby books: the books which go to make flabby minds, flabby hearts, and flabby souls. The mass of such is prodigious: and the danger from them the more serious from the very fact that they are not obviously vicious, so carry no warning. They are insidious.

You cannot forbid them: but there is no use in preaching against them unless you offer as cheaply—*more* cheaply—that is to say for no price at all—the books which really signify: the books which make for some affirmative good. That is the office of a governmental library: particularly its office just because it is a governmental library; because as such it represents the community as a whole acting for some affirmative good to the community as a whole. The library is no censor. It does not dictate to the individual: he is still free to read what he fancies—at his own expense. Its responsibility is merely to see to the right expenditure of public funds. Its process is not that of rejection but that of selection. But its wise decisions form a potent example and influence. Against the bad books it opposes an array of the good books, against the books which soil it opposes the books which clean and freshen, against the morbid books it opposes the wholesome books, against the enfeebling books it opposes the invigorating books. It does not denounce the one nor champion the other. It champions only that sound preference in the community itself which really wants the best and looks to its public authorities to provide this. Against the new book, also, courting favor by fair means or foul it may wisely oppose the book tried by time, tested by the

judgment of ages. In this it may exercise a conservative, a steadying influence, much needed in a democracy. A private citizen may build his home of whatever style of architecture meets his present fancy: but no one blames the government for choosing for its public buildings the stately classic. Indeed we rejoice in such a choice, and successive generations rejoice in it, for the satisfaction is enduring. And equally should we rejoice when in its choice of the books which it shall furnish it ignores the current fashions and trusts itself to those which in the judgment of time have become "standard." We do not call it "old-fashioned" in the one case, and we should not in the other.

A library regarding these considerations may indeed represent enduring power as well as apt knowledge. And if, as has been said, "it is a fundamental object of democratic education to lift the whole population to a higher plane of intelligence, conduct and happiness," the place and the effective service of libraries in such a system of education cannot be doubted.

But the service of books is something more than to raise the general level: it is to provide for the exceptional higher levels. It is not their function to make all men alike—and all women (still less, all men like all women, or the reverse). It is not the function even of education, though this works with prescribed material in prescribed methods upon a limited constituency under control. It is still less a function of books which are not imposed upon the reader, and whose service is not imperative but responsive. They foster that which is in him, but it must be in him. They are, as it were, the divining rod touching the hidden spring; but the spring must be there, or it will not gush.

It is not the office of books to reduce men and women to an identity. They could not, if they would. "Though many creatures eat from one dish," says Emerson in a passage I am fond of quoting, "each according to its nature assimilates from the elements that which belongs to it: the fox converts whatever prey the meadow yields him into fox, the snake into snake; and Peter and John are working up all existence into Peter and John."

Peter and John may read the same book until Dooms-

day, and Peter remain Peter, and John, John. An enlarged Peter, perhaps, and an enlarged John; but still Peter, still John.

But we want them to remain, or rather to continue, so. It is not the business of education to make them alike; it may even be its business to make them different. A state of things where all men are alike, and all women, is savagery, not civilization; and it means despotism, not democracy. In a democracy the peculiar business of education, especially of books, is to discover in each individual that which is individual with himself and to promote and foster this. It is to *free* him,—to open the door for his individual abilities so that they may come to a full, free, and independent activity. In this way it makes of him a unit of efficiency—a unit of energy, not of resistance. And this also is what democracy needs, for while its stability may rest upon the mass, its progress rests upon the initiative of the individual units within this mass. If we are to advance we must have leaders among men, scholars in the professions, masters in the arts, seers in the sciences, and prophets, not merely in the shop, but in the temples.

So if it be a fundamental service of our libraries to raise the average level, it is also an essential service that they furnish unique opportunity to the individual to raise himself above this level. They aid the ordinary man in the "pursuit of knowledge," but also the exceptional man in the "inquiry" of it. They equip him, but they also—as divining rods—evoke him. It is our municipal libraries which evoke him, even if it be our research libraries which are to carry him in his higher flights.

But finally, there is a need of democracy beyond this: it is for the creation of a certain homogeneity of conviction and of sentiment which shall embody an *ideal* truly national and truly characteristic and which shall ensure as well a sound general tendency in purpose and conduct, as a certain unanimity in great crises. A complete and potent civilization requires this. But how effect it? It was characteristic of the most complete and, for its time and dimension the most potent, civilization that we know —that of Athens. But the influential population of Athens consisted of but 30,000 persons, alike in race and

breeding, identical in habit and interest. It lay within an area of fifteen miles square. It could all be brought within reach of a single voice, in the Agora, or the Stadium, or the Olympieum or the theatre of Dionysus.

What of a population of ninety million persons, diverse in race, intelligence, education and habit; scattered over an area of three million square miles (and only geographers know how much besides)? How ensure among these the effective uniformity necessary to a national ideal? The means must be many; but among them the means furnished by libraries must be chief: for by these they are brought into common contact with an identical material and influence; they are brought into touch—not shoulder to shoulder, but mind to mind, heart to heart, soul to soul with their fellows, and into a larger world fellowship than their environs can know; and they are made common participants in the heritage of the past—in what the wise men have thought, how the able men have wrought, what the holy men (the poets) have felt and taught. If other forces and elements—climate, soil, industry, local interest—must have their influence in producing the type-ideal, surely the influence of this common contact and participation must be potent in shaping an ideal which will be sound, inducing a conduct which will be sane: and it will be none the less sound, none the less sane, and doubtless even the more effective in that it will represent a unique fusion of that which is a common heritage, of that which is indigenous with us, and of those diverse traits, influences and traditions which each of the combining stocks has brought with it from the old world.

Representing, then, a national agency concerned with the common weal, I gladly bring my wreath to this occasion, rejoicing not merely in what it means to the interests fundamental or local with yourselves, but in the assurance which it offers of a larger service to our common democracy, and through it to the problems of all mankind.

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: We regret very much that several of our friends are not with us on this occasion. Mr. Carnegie was unable to be present, and our co-worker, Mr. F. H. Lehmann, who was with us many years as

President of the Board, found it impossible to break his engagements to be here.

I also have a letter from the Executive Board of the American Library Association, which has been holding a meeting; that Association represents all the librarians in the country, and in their letter they convey the information that the Association has voted to extend to the Board of Directors of the Public Library of St. Louis cordial congratulations on the opening of the Central Building; they offer their best wishes for the future welfare of the institution, and have confidence in the continuance of the wise direction and administration which has secured for it the confidence of the community, expressing their gratitude for the many valued services which its librarians have rendered to the Association and to library interests in general.

This Library is a City institution; it belongs to the City; it receives its money from the taxpayers, and we naturally look to a representative of the City for some word on this occasion. Mayor Kreismann is unavoidably absent, and I have asked the Hon. J. H. Gundlach, President of the Council, to say a word to us. (Applause.)

MR. GUNDLACH: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen. While the absence of the Mayor is going to prove a disappointment to you, it will have, at least, this advantage, that my remarks will be necessarily brief, which will extend the time allotted to the gentlemen who are to follow, that they may say things more interesting and more entertaining than I possibly could.

I just want to say, briefly, that nothing is so indicative of the inclination and culture of a people as its schools, and the monuments which it rears to act as the repositories for all that human brain has thought and wrought, since the beginning of the human era.

I want to commend the Board of Control of this Library, that they were enabled to provide the City with such a beautiful building, so simple in its outlines, and yet so beautifully simple that it will stand, I believe, as a monument, not only as a distinguishing monument of St. Louis

architecture, but also as one of the main attractions of our city for all time to come.

On behalf of the city, I congratulate the people on having acquired a beautiful building in which may be seen and studied all of human thought and effort that has been wrought since the world began; and let us hope that it may forever prove an inspiration, not only to us, but to the generations yet unborn—an inspiration for uplift, and a higher life, a life such as we truly should live, one that is not measured by mere existence, or by a struggle for self-preservation, but a life animated by the vitality of health in mind and body, a life that can read in the starry canopy of the heavens the history of the ages that preceded the dawn of our own, and one that will interpret to us the obligations we owe one to another, that we may realize in ourselves, each one for himself, that he is simply an atom in creation, that can only justify its presence by the harmony of its action with that of the universe itself; whose highest aim shall be to leave behind a memory that will prove an inspiration for the future advancement of the race.

In conclusion, I want again to congratulate the City of St. Louis on the acquisition of this beautiful structure. (Applause.)

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: The administrative work of a library is done largely through its committees. The Vice-President of our Board is, and has been for a number of years, the Chairman of its Building Committee, and you may know from what you now see that his duties have been many and varied.

I have the pleasure of introducing to you Mr. John F. Lee, Vice-President of the Board. (Applause.)

MR. LEE: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: The eloquent and well deserved tribute our Congressional Librarian, who may justly be regarded as the head of his profession in this country, has paid to the life and labors of Frederick M. Crunden, has been received by this audience with hearty and grateful approval.

This is not the occasion to speak of everything that Mr. Crunden achieved, or to attempt a full appreciation

of his life and lofty character; but I believe it is eminently proper that one who for years was the daily witness of his life, his activities and his labors—his endeavors to give to the city all the benefits which flow from a well conducted library, and to place that library in a suitable building, should be added to what Mr. Putnam has so well said.

Mr. Crunden was appointed Librarian of the Public School Library of this city in 1877. That library had few books and a very small membership. It was not a free library, for it charged its members for the use of its books, and the sums so received, with the small amount paid over to it from time to time from the public school fund, constituted all it had for its support.

It was scarcely a library in more than the name, and it was not a public library at all.

All the great changes which have since taken place have followed the initiative of Mr. Crunden.

For many years the progress was slow; at times it halted altogether, but he was ideally formed for the task which he had assumed. He was capable of great labor; he loved his work and he gave himself to it without limit. His talents were of high order and the range of his learning was wide.

His nature was gentle and loving, but where principle was involved he was inflexible. He had no rancor; he was not embittered by opposition, or even by defeat, but he considered defeat only as another reason for another effort in another direction.

So deep was his sincerity and so strong the belief he held as to the uses of a public library, that many a man has been led to his support because of his sympathy with Mr. Crunden.

When he began his library work it was not the sentiment of a majority of our citizens that a library filled a public want or met a public duty. He set himself to work to build up the sentiment in its favor, which is so overwhelming today.

He started the project of divorcing the public library from the public school and giving to the library a governing board of its own. He first suggested the application to Mr. Carnegie, which resulted in that philanthropist's contributing nearly one-third of the cost of this building,

and the total cost of all of our branch libraries in operation today. He first advocated the levying of the tax by which St. Louis now supports her libraries, and when the site upon which we now are was covered with the Exposition Building, then successfully conducted, he announced this as the place where at some future day this great Central Library building would be placed.

In fact, during the more than thirty-two years for which he was librarian, he was the life, the soul and center of every great advance it made.

When the time came to prepare for the erection of this building and to determine what it ought to be, the board applied to him to report as to the Library's requirements. His report was submitted and accepted.

Very shortly after, Mr. Crunden's illness came upon him and for a time the light of his mind went out.

Then a year passed during which arrangements were perfected for the competition among the architects, plans were handed in and the time to choose between the plans arrived. The nature of his illness had baffled the skill of the ablest physicians, and none of them had held out any hope that his condition would ever be better than it was. Yet, as the time for deciding upon the plans arrived, he grew stronger, his mind cleared, and upon the day the award was to be made, he came back to his old office, his intellect as clear as ever it had been.

I shall never forget the eager interest with which he went from plan to plan as the plans hung upon the wall, and when he came to that in which the genius of Cass Gilbert had realized more than his fondest hopes, he gazed upon it with face enraptured. We were told that he left the city a day or two later, and then that he was not so well.

The illness came upon him again; the darkness descended, and for nearly three years his mind was a blank.

This building at that time had been completed save for a few points of interior finish, when it was announced that Mr. Crunden was again growing better. Again the cloud lifted and he was able to appreciate what had been done during his illness and to rejoice at it, for he saw that St. Louis had a great library building, with six branches scattered over the city, supported by an ample tax.

In other words, the dream that he had dreamed more than a third of a century was realized.

It was not ordained that he should enter into the promised land. He was called to his reward when his work was done, but he fell in the hour of victory.

The Board of Directors of the Library, sharing the sentiment of the people of St. Louis in regard to his services, determined to place over the door of this building, carved in imperishable granite above his name, words from his writings expressing the purposes for which it was erected —not only for the beauty of the language, not only for the truth which it expressed, but also that it should for ages to come be, as far as is permitted, his monument— memorial of his love and services for his fellow men.

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: For this building which we are here to dedicate, we are indebted very largely to the brain and genius of one man—its architect. We are fortunate in having with us today the man who designed this great building, Mr. Cass Gilbert of New York.

I have the pleasure of introducing to you Mr. Cass Gilbert, the architect of the Central Library Building. (Applause.)

MR. GILBERT: Mr. President, Board of Directors, Ladies and Gentlemen: In accepting the invitation to take part in this ceremony it was with a lively sense of how small my own part has been in giving to your work such measure of success as it may have achieved. It is not for me to praise the result of our joint labors, others must make that judgment; and upon their observation as upon trial and use will be formed an intelligent expert and public opinion which will, I hope, approve of what we have done. It may not be out of place, however, for me to take this opportunity to publicly thank you and the members of your Board, both past and present, for your unfailing courtesy and your cordial helpful co-operation throughout the whole progress of the work. Without such co-operation no architect can succeed. The client has his duty to perform toward the architect if the best result is to be achieved in any important work—a duty of loyalty, good

will, and broad helpfulness, without which the architect's position is difficult indeed. Let me, therefore, express to you a deep sense of personal appreciation of the constant and unfailing help which has been given to me and to my associates by the Board throughout this work.

No great work nowadays is carried forward by a single individual; buildings of this magnitude are the result of the co-operation of many minds. It is fortuitous perhaps that I should be the one to be accredited with a certain measure of such merit as the building may have, but it would be unfair and unjust that the work of those who have been associated with me should not be recognized. To the Board in charge of carrying on this work, to the Library Staff, to those who have been immediately connected with the design and construction, to my associates, Mr. John R. Rockart and Mr. Thomas R. Johnson, whose skill and taste have been under constant demand, to Mr. Louis Smetana and other draftsmen in the early stages of the work, to Mr. B. S. Harrison, the mechanical engineer, to Mr. Gunvald Aus, the structural engineer, and to Mr. F. L. Douglas, clerk of the works and local superintendent, and not least of these, to Mr. Bodwell, the able manager for the contractor, who has assembled the material, and to Mr. Elmer E. Garnsey, the skilled decorator, whose refined color sense has gone far to perfect the work—to all of these and others, is due public recognition and appreciation. No architect ever had more loyal and helpful co-operation. This group of men have performed their functions not alone for gain, but with a sense of duty and civic pride.

In the design of the building it has always been first in mind that it should be a good working library—that it should fill its functions as such. But as a library makes for culture and civilization, that it should be a suitable housing for a worthy purpose. That it should provide surroundings of refined beauty for scholarly pursuits and that the library building should stand in the community as an expression of utility and of the refined good taste of this city. If these ideals have been in some measure achieved we shall not have labored in vain.

I venture to hope that as time goes on this building

may be embellished by noble works of art, such as great mural paintings and beautiful sculpture, and be the repository of treasured objects of virtu.

And now, Mr. President, it gives me great pleasure to deliver to you the keys of the Central Public Library of the City of St. Louis.

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: In accepting these keys, Mr. Gilbert, as a symbol of the completed building, I desire to express on the part of each and every member of the Board their sincere gratification and satisfaction at the result of your work.

It is a building of which you, as well as we, may well be proud, and one that, as its utility and beauty become known in the city, will continue to be an ever-increasing source of satisfaction to the citizens of St. Louis—its real owners. (Applause.)

The Public Library began its work in 1893; ever since that time its Board has been anxious to obtain a Central Building. They began saving at once, with that idea in mind, from their income. After a few years they thought they were strong enough to buy a piece of ground at Seventeenth and Locust Streets, and later bought more, at that location.

As the years went on, Mr. Crunden, as has been stated, communicated with Mr. Andrew Carnegie, and in 1901, with the able assistance of Dr. Samuel J. Niccolls, who, I am glad to see, is with us today, Mr. Carnegie gave to this Board one million dollars, to be spent, five hundred thousand dollars as a part of the expenses of the main building, and five hundred thousand dollars for its branches, with the provisions that the sites should be free, and that a fund of not less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars yearly income should be provided by the city.

This meant that we had to go again to the citizens of St. Louis and ask them to vote on an increased tax from one-fifth of a mill to two-fifths of a mill. That vote was very largely in the affirmative, and we were then able to proceed.

The Municipal Assembly also granted the right to place the Library upon this site, with the understanding

that any and all rights and property of the Exposition Company should be acquired. This took a large sum of money, some two hundred and eighty thousand dollars. That money was provided by public-spirited citizens, largely connected with the St. Louis Union Trust Company, that company also being a contributor.

We then saw our way clear to the erection of a large Central Building, and succeeded in selling our property at Seventeenth, Olive and Locust Streets on advantageous terms. We were fortunate in our plans of procedure to have the services of Professor F. M. Mann, of Washington University. He prepared our preliminary plan of limited competition.

That plan was to select nine architects, four from other cities, and five local architects, and in this competition, the result was, as you know, a unanimous verdict in favor of the plan of Mr. Cass Gilbert.

Mr. Gilbert then completed his plans and put them in the hands of nine contracting firms, with the result that the John Pierce Company was awarded the contract for $1,372,000.

There is one rather remarkable result of that contract which I think it is proper to speak of; in the time during which this building has progressed—a little over three years—I presume there have been something like one hundred and fifty changes suggested and passed upon affirmatively by our Board. Fully one hundred of these changes were items which called for increased cost, and which we believed were in the direction of greater utility and service. Some of them, on the other hand, suggested by the architect, were also in the nature of credits, without detracting from the quality of the building. The remarkable result of those changes in these three years is that the contract today is no larger than it was when it was originally made, over three years ago. (Applause.)

By the delivery of these keys, this building is completed, and I now so declare it, and open for public service. (Applause.)

This proceeding would not be in any sense complete, if we did not have a few words from one who is the administrator of the Library at the present time—one who

has done much to enlarge its operations in the last two years, during which he has been in charge. I now have the pleasure of introducing our Librarian and the Secretary of the Board, Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick. (Applause.)

DR. BOSTWICK: Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen: In opening a library in the city of Boston many years ago, Oliver Wendell Holmes told his audience that a library was a temple not less than a dome-crowned cathedral; that all in it and of it should work together for the service of humanity.

Service! That is the watchword of the library today. In so far as we have books, they are for service; in so far as we have a capable, intelligent and competent staff, it is for service; in so far as we have this magnificent building, that, too, is for service. And, so far as we are able to succeed in manipulating these elements to give to the people of St. Louis service, we shall have succeeded; so far as they do not prove to be of service, we shall have failed. We are content to leave the verdict in your hands.

While I am here, I desire to give notice that, in order to give the best service to the people of St. Louis, we are thinking of closing this building to the public tomorrow, Sunday. The moving of the books is not yet completed, and in order that the books may be in the building and the building ready for use on Monday morning, it is necessary that it shall be closed entirely tomorrow.

PRESIDENT CARPENTER: The Archbishop of St. Louis needs no introduction to the citizens of St. Louis, and before we close he has kindly consented to say a few words. I have the great pleasure of introducing the Most Rev. John J. Glennon. (Applause.)

ARCHBISHOP GLENNON: Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen: The privilege is afforded me of making a few remarks, before pronouncing the benediction, and this is quite a privilege, namely, that of having the last word to say. Because in that way, we have the opportunity of talking about those who have gone before us, and not

being equally punished by those who come behind us. (Laughter.)

But our words for those who have gone before us can be only words of praise; for commencing with the work of the architect, and continuing down to the present moment, the entire operation of this library has been classic. The building itself is classic in its outlines, in its setting, in its reposefulness, in its purity, in its strength.

Classic also were the speeches made this afternoon, one by the Librarian of Congress, another, the beautiful tribute made by Mr. Lee to his friend, Mr. Crunden. And the remarks made by the other distinguished gentlemen were all in line—the pure line—of the classic.

I deem it a privilege to join with you in dedicating this library building; a building, I say, but not books, for of these I see no evidence whatever (laughter), except indeed, the human documents which are before us (and they say those are the most precious documents).

But outside of human documents which are around us, there is nothing, except the building. And first I would take the opportunity of joining with you in heartily congratulating Mr. Gilbert for the elegant structure he has given us.

This building—I was going to say that it is the handsomest and most complete in the City of St. Louis, and I could do so without reserve, it if were not for the fact that I am in the building line myself. (Laughter.)

But the Librarian here is to be congratulated, too; not alone upon having the custody of such a beautiful building, but upon the great responsibility which he has, and which he will have in the future.

For this library has a relationship to all the people of this City of St. Louis. It is not for a sect, a tribe, or a creed; it is for the people—for the democracy; it is for the democracy of this latest day. Consequently, he who is the librarian, who is the guide, the mentor, the inspiration, and the protector of these things, has to do with this democracy, with this city of ours, so that he is more than the Czar of Russia—he is our "Little Father," intellectually speaking.

Long ago the library was chiefly for the purpose of

preservation. The library of Alexandria, the Vatican library at Rome, the great libraries of the great universities—they were all for the purpose of preserving documents, folios and manuscripts—to preserve them as records of the past, to be referred to from time to time by scholars who consulted them.

So far this is also the obligation of the library of today—to preserve the records of the past; but in our days, a greater and grander mission is before it, the duty not only to preserve the past, but to promote the intellectual welfare of the people of today—it is to stand for the intellectual well-being of the community.

And this is the responsibility and obligation which is placed upon our librarian and his venerable Board—that they have to guard well the intellectual food upon which this community shall feast; that they shall not give us "embalmed beef" or other articles of food intellectual, that are tainted; that they shall not present to us that which is unwholesome or unsound; but that we shall grow under their auspices to be sound of mind, for, if we are not sound of mind, we will not be sound of body, nor will this democracy of ours be sound.

That responsibility is a very great one, and I hope—I am sure—from what we know of the gentlemen who are the custodians of this library, and the Board of this library, that this work will be well done.

Of course, in dealing with a democracy, we cannot put before it the ideal of the "Index Expurgatory" of Rome—there are several books that will be admitted here that would be placed on that Index (laughter), but there is a line sharply drawn between truth and falsehood, between the moral and the unmoral—between the good and the bad, and we can gladly leave to the discernment of these gentlemen to draw that line in their selections and approval; we realize that they appreciate that work, that a sense of responsibility for the moral welfare of the community actuates them.

There is one field, of course, where it is very difficult for them to draw the line—and that is the field of fiction. If I mistake not very much, the modern reading public is very greatly given to works of fiction; I realize that it

would not be fair to make any impromptu rules to guide these gentlemen in their decisions regarding what books under the head of fiction should be admitted and what should not be admitted into the library; yet I would make one suggestion: that they ought to admit no work of fiction until the author thereof is dead—say—about ten years. (Laughter.) Thereby it will be seen that they are not under the influence of these corporations that promote the sale of the "best sellers" of the year.

And I might add, too, that some of them who write fiction today would be better off if they had died ten years before they wrote that fiction. (Laughter.)

But again, I think if we have the rules made by these gentlemen carefully and conscientiously applied, that we will be amply safeguarded. This democracy of ours—this seething, inquiring, restless democracy of today, with its threatenings, its rumblings, its dangerous ebullitions of passion—that democracy made up of all the races and tribes—a Pentecost, without its tongues—without its spirit—this modern democracy of ours has a relationship to this library of ours. I do hope that the work of the schools, the colleges, the universities, which directly radiate, and the work of this library which, as Mr. Gilbert has shown, will have the power of indirectly radiating knowledge—that both together will enlighten; until that Star of Bethlehem whose course in the heavens we celebrate today, this Epiphany day, may make of this library an Epiphany—a light shining for those who are sitting in darkness—an intellectual light that will flame forth to the skies, leading to Him who is the Truth, the Way and the Life.

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, to bless this great work inaugurated today. We pray the God of Truth to vivify all therein that is of truth, and to drive into the shadow all that is false and tainted, that those who run may read the truth of things, may rejoice in its use, and be blessed in its service. Amen.

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